

EPSU 8th Congress briefing - Health and social services

The health section of our congress will have three main sections: 1. the debate and vote on our congress resolution: health and social services with {{Karen Jennings}} (pictured), EPSU Health chair 2. A message to the EU Health Ministers (meeting on 9-10 June) to amend the [draft directive on cross-border healthcare-><http://www.epsu.org/r/23>] 3. A press conference on an [agreement on medical sharps with the European Hospital Employers-><http://www.epsu.org/r/426>] (more to follow!) {{Congress Item 4) Resolution R.4 "Health and Social Services"}} This will be introduced by {{Jiří Schlanger}}, President of the Trade Union of the Health Service and Social Care of the Czech Republic- the resolution affirms: the importance of the health care and social services sectors; that they serve a public interest first and foremost; that the influence of market forces and liberalisation is having a negative impact on working conditions and job security; that demographic change and an ageing population will increase demand for these services which must be met by sufficient, motivated well-paid and well-trained staff; that changes in the organization and provision of these services is causing concern regarding trade union rights and representation. It calls on EPSU and its affiliates to: develop and raise a strong trade union profile and voice in public, private and non-profit health and social services; offer alternatives to EU market and competition-based initiatives in these areas; strengthen industrial relations in health and social services at European, national, regional and local level; develop a strategy to protect health and social service workers from inhumane treatment and precarious work; and promote and advocate trade union rights for health and social services workers in the public, private and non-profit sectors. {{Newsflash}}: In 2008 the European Commission proposed a cross-border healthcare directive. During the EPSU congress, on 9-10 June, EU Health Ministers will meet to discuss this issue. EPSU calls on the Ministers to respect the universal principles of healthcare provision and to ensure that this is given legal weight by making Article 152 of the EU treaty the legal basis of the directive. Specifically in the health and social services sector, EPSU is demanding that services should be properly organized and governed and funded on the basis of solidarity and equity. EPSU asks for alternatives to EU market and competition-based initiatives in the area of health and social services by restating the responsibilities of public authorities and ensuring people's rights. EPSU wants to develop and continue campaigning

activities with the objective to ensure that any present and future legal and non-legal European initiatives concerning the health care and social services sector, and in particular the (proposed) “Directive on the application of patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare” will adequately reflect and safeguard the universality- and solidarity- basis of these services. Finally, EPSU will call on the new Parliament to ensure that any European proposal on health services takes, as its departure point, the principles of solidarity, equal access, affordability and universality. Articulating legal personality for these principles in the context of health services delivery remains one of the greatest challenges of the EU.

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